

Fifty Nine Applications Received For Disease Team Planning Awards --Planning Grants that Fund Innovative Research Model to be Awarded in June 2008

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SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., February 4, 2008 CIRM today announced that it has received and accepted 59 applications for the Disease Team Planning Awards. Fifty applications were received from non-profit organizations and 9 have been submitted by for-profit companies.

The Disease Team Planning Awards will support the assembly of multi-disciplinary teams of scientists who will develop research plans for therapies or diagnostics for specific diseases or injuries. CIRM will fund up to 20 planning grants of up to \$55,000 each that will enable teams to consider the key strategic and operational issues faced when assembling a multidisciplinary team. The grants will support up to six months of planning and proposal development for the CIRM Disease Team Research Awards. CIRM anticipates issuing the applications for multi-year Disease Team Research Awards shortly following the planning cycle. Receipt of a Planning Award is not a prerequisite for submitting a Disease Team Research Award application.

"Our ultimate goal is to fund research that will deliver stem cell therapies and cures to patients," stated Alan O. Trounson, president of CIRM. "By funding this innovative disease team approach that encourages early collaboration among experts in the many disciplines and functions involved in moving a concept from preclinical research into the clinic, we hope to facilitate rapid advances across a broad spectrum of diseases. A key objective of the subsequent Disease Team Research Award will be for teams to produce an approvable regulatory filing enabling human clinical testing within four years after the award."

Planning Award applications were received across a broad spectrum of therapeutic areas, including cardiovascular disease, neurological disease, and cancer, among others.

CIRM's Disease Team Planning Awards aim to facilitate the highest quality basic, translational and clinical stem cell research in a disease team setting. Translational research that advances a concept from research to patient care benefits from a team-based approach that encourages early consultation and cooperation among researchers of diverse skills and expertise. This approach has the potential to advance therapies into the clinic more rapidly.

The Grants Working Group will review the applications and make funding recommendations in April, and decisions on funding by the Independent Citizen's Oversight Committee (ICOC), the CIRM's governing board, will take place in June 2008.

About CIRM: CIRM was established in 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. To date, the CIRM governing board has approved 156 research grants totaling almost \$260 million, making CIRM the largest source of funding for human embryonic stem cell research in the world. For more information, please visit www.cirm.ca.gov.

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